

PRAISING GOD.

Praise is more than thanksgiving. It is different even from adoration. Both thanksgiving and adoration are involved in it. It is the expression of the soul's appreciation of what God is as well as of what he does.

This appreciation of the character and acts of God is more than mere homage. It involves the tenderest feelings of the heart as well as the loftiest apprehension by the mind. Praise springs from the heart and the head.

It is due as thanksgiving is due. We are grateful because we are recipients of grace. We should be praiseful because of the character of the giver. Thanksgiving sees the benefit. Praise sees the benefactor. It is because God is what he is that we have occasion to thank Him for what we receive.

In nearly every case where prayer is enjoined by the Scriptures, praise is called for. Recognition of the wisdom, power, goodness, mercy of God lie, indeed, at the very basis of prayer. Belief in the divine existence and divine attributes is essential to prayer. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

"Praise is comely." It is not only befitting, the proper thing, the right thing, to tender, signaling the soul's appreciation of the character and goodness of God, but it is also attractive in itself. There is something about an act of sincere praise that renders the worshiper an object of admiration. The world likes to see appreciation. It may reject the object adored, but it respects the worshiper whom it regards as sincere.

True praise will incite us to try to make others praise. "Come thou with us" is ever the call of every one who loves the Saviour. As soon as John found the Lamb of God he went and brought his brother to Christ. So did Andrew. And Philip, too, at once called Nathanael.

Full meed of praise to God can never be given. He is infinitely beyond our highest conception and infinitely more gracious than human mind can conceive. That should not deter, however, from giving all one can. A child may not be able to fathom the depth of its mother's love. But that should not keep it from giving the mother the tenderest offering it can bring.

Thoughts of praise must have words or praise. There must be outward ascription of glory to him who is high and lifted up. Every instinct and every suggestion of reason, as well as God's own Word, declares this. Profession, expression, and possession must go hand in hand.

Praise is due God in Christ for things which have not occurred no less than for those which have occurred. Many a time God's best blessings lie in the things which he has prevented. One has strikingly said: "We ought to thank God daily for the sins we have not committed!"

Praise is due Him, too, for the ills His people suffer. "We glory in tribulations also." "I take pleasure in distress for Christ's sake." The tribulations and distresses are a part of the marvellous plan. They are links in the chain by which He binds His people to the throne.

THANKS ALL THE TIME.

The recurrence of Thanksgiving Day should again remind us that gratitude in the heart and expression of it with the lips and life should not be confined to one season or to one day. Not only when they are singing the "harvest home," but when they are witnessing the bounteous providence which makes the fertile earth send forth the tender blade, and which then develops the plant, until under sunshine and rain the plant comes out in all its fulness and is ready to bear its rich grain, should men adore the goodness of God and praise Him for His grace. That a special time should be set apart for thanksgiving is well. But the best preparation for its happiest observance will be found in a heart that is grateful all the year round. Thanksgiving Day should be only the culmination of praise.

And "all the time" in thanks giving should mean time to come as well as time past. The gratitude from which it comes should be combined with a trust so genuine that the soul will know that the same grace which has abounded in the past is guaranteed for the future. God's unchangeableness is, indeed, one of the chief grounds for both assurance and gratefulness. He that has never left us nor forsaken us is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is worthy of our most absolute trust. And the faith that is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, will make us thankful for those things not yet in our hands but sure to come.

Not least in our thoughts at this special season should be those gifts of God which are as a rule taken as a matter of course, which are so general that we forget them. Some of these are the power of faith, the sweetness of love, the comfort of hope. Home life, affection, mother love, health, shelter, peace, are not less subjects for thanks giving because they are so commonplace or general. They are the basis of many other gifts. Let them not be forgotten as we are tempted to be absorbed in the thought of the more measurable or ponderable blessings of the year.

THE MATTER WITH THE CHURCH.

A well-known magazine has lately published a symposium on this topic. Prominent men representing various forms of religion—Jewish, Catholic, Protestant and others, have favored the reading public with their opinions which vary almost as much as their denominational creeds and names. Some expressed views and sentiments whose general tenor may be endorsed by all who love the Church and appreciate its paramount position in the affairs of men.

To affirm that there is nothing the matter with the Church would be to announce a millennial state to which it certainly has not yet attained. The Church has infirmities and humiliations, its reverses and perils. But if we are to estimate its condition upon the basis of its most prominent characteristics in relation to organized society, at present, we must say that the Church is the light of the world, the salt of the earth, the pillar and ground of the truth. The true Church is Christ's body, His heritage, His representative among men, through which he is subduing all things unto himself. "For though we walk in the flesh